

# NRCS **NEWS RELEASE**

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## **Sign-Up for the Conservation Stewardship Program**

ST PAUL, MN, January 4, 2011- USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Minnesota State Conservationist Don Baloun reminds Ag producers to sign-up for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Applications for CSP will be accepted through January 21, 2011.

"Minnesota has been successful in previous CSP sign-ups. This program provides many conservation benefits including the improvement of water and soil quality, wildlife habitat enhancement and the adoption of conservation activities that address the effects of climate change," said Baloun.

CSP is offered in all 50 states, District of Columbia, and the Pacific and Caribbean areas through continuous sign-ups with announced cut-off dates for application ranking periods. All producers are encouraged to apply for CSP. The program, as authorized in the 2008 Farm bill, offers payments to producers who maintain a high level of conservation on their land and who agrees to adopt higher levels of conservation stewardship. Eligible lands include: cropland, pastureland, rangeland and non-industrial forestland.

A CSP self-screening checklist is available to help producers determine if CSP is suitable for their operation. The checklist highlights basic information about CSP eligibility requirements, contract obligations and potential payments. It is available from local NRCS offices or online at: [http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new\\_csp/csp.html](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp/csp.html).

For more information about NRCS conservation programs online, visit: <http://www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov> or visit your local USDA Service Center.

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